

Extension Line

By Val Warnick

Safe snowmobiling

After you've been snowmobiling for a few years, there is a tendency to ignore safety precautions and take shortcuts.

Key service checks should be made prior to setting out. Fuel system, lights, track drive belt and steering system should be in good condition. Make sure that the owner's manual is in your sled's storage compartment for quick reference. On any trip, long or

short, be sure to carry an extra drive belt, spark plugs, and the tools to make minor repairs and adjustments. Some wooden kitchen matches and candy bars can come in handy as well.

Planning a long trip? Tell a responsible person where you are going and when you expect to return. Most importantly, don't go alone. Use the buddy system to be sure you have assistance in case of an accident.

Once the machine checks out and you have packed essentials, it's time to review safe driving procedures. Do you come to a complete stop at railroad and highway crossings? Do you stay off of railroad right-of-ways? Are you familiar with all provincial and local regulations? Do you obey them? If your answer to any of these questions is 'no', you could be headed for trouble!

Do you keep your feet on the footrests of your snowmobile? Dragging a foot when turning a corner can lead to injury. Do you watch for hidden logs, snow-covered rocks, fence posts, and tree stumps? Do you stay on established

